

Perfinned Postcards

One in a Series

Bob Szymanski (LM#145)

The heyday of picture postcards and the beginning of the authorized use of perfinned stamps in the United States coincided nicely for perfin collectors. March 1, 1907 ushered in the "Divided Back Era" of postcards. This is the first time that postcard users could not only write an address on the right side of the back but also pen a message on the left side of the back. Wow! A greeting or other message - what a novel idea!

As an aside, Germany was ahead of the rest of the world in the lithographic printing process used to manufacture picture postcards; therefore, you will find that until WWI began in 1914, most were printed in Germany. As you search through postcards looking for perfins, you will certainly notice that from the inception of US perfin use in May 1908 through the years that follow, many picture postcards are found with perfins. Why are so many postcards found? Deltiology (postcard collecting) was a wide spread hobby in the early part of the 20th century.

Picture postcards were used by individuals both authorized (usually with perfinned stamps purchased from the various railroads that sold them to their passengers), and unauthorized (most of the other non-railroad perfins that you might find more often than you might think.) Picture postcards were also used by salesmen to announce to customers and prospects that they would be calling on them at a specific time. As shown here, picture postcards, were also used by companies as an advertising tool. Oh yes, and as we shall see, even in 1910, a hundred years ago, you might have been inundated with advertising!

The Barber Asphalt Paving Company is one of the companies that must have sent a lot of advertising picture postcards. This company's perfin is identified in the US Catalog as B23 and is a D+ rated perfin. I possess 16 of their cards, several of which are shown with this article. All that I have are in black and white only. All of these postcards have the same



"one cent" green Franklin. I have 2 additional copies of this pattern in my collection, both on the "two cent" red Washington. I would deduce that the large number of "one cent" stamps is found because these have been kept on postcards; issues of larger denominations would be found off cover. Check your collection and let me know your findings to see if they substantiate my reasoning.

All of the copies of the BAP postcards that I possess were postmarked either in 1910 or 1911. If you have a similar postcard, is it any earlier or later.

I have nine copies (without a small number in the lower left corner of the back side) and dated 1910 in my collection - EKU August 18, 1910 and LKU October 8, 1910. Also, I have seven copies (six different) that, as shown, all possess a small number which might have been too small to copy well. The cards shown here have numbers of 1, 2, 6, 8, 9 & 10. In this group the EKU is Dec 28, 1910 and the LKU is March 15, 1911. This must be a series of picture postcards that succeeded the first (unnumbered) group. I would appreciate hearing from anyone having any with numbers other than these I have listed.

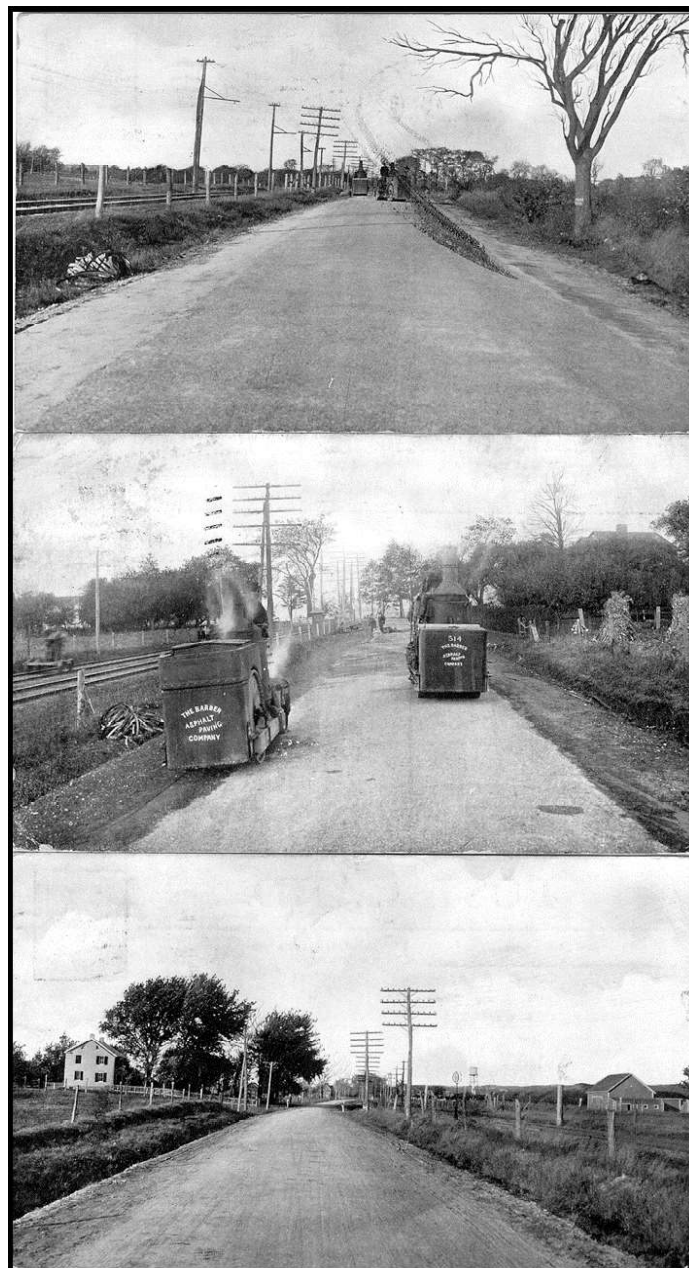
THE	THE	THE	THE	THE	Do not take our word. Investigate and address ROAD DEPARTMENT THE BARBER ASPHALT PAVING COMPANY Philadelphia, Pa.
1	2	6	8	9	10

Although I have no idea how many different cards exist, only three of mine are duplicates as to both the picture and the printed message.

The pictures all depict various streets that the Barber Asphalt Paving Company had paved or was in the process of paving. One of the more interesting items I noticed while studying these postcards was that there were three different views of Waterford State Rd. (somewhere) in New York. Wherever this road is, I wonder if it is still rural and looks anything like the pictures? Does any member know if this is still a rural route somewhere or if urbanization or suburbanization has taken over?

So you think you are inundated with mass junk mailings today. Check. Be happy that you weren't poor Mr. R.F.Metcalf of Georgetown, MA. He was sent at least the four picture postcards that I possess.

These are dated August 18th, August 21st, August 25th and August 26th. These were persistent people at Barber Asphalt Paving! They didn't even give the poor man time to turn them down before they mailed another card! I hope that, at least, Mr. Metcalf was a perfin collector or a deltiologist!



I would love to hear from any members who possess any of this firm's postcards.